



**Governor's Office of
Homeland Security &
Emergency Preparedness**

JOINT INFORMATION CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 27, 2012

**DEQ Requests Fuel Waiver from EPA in
Advance of Isaac**

BATON ROUGE, La. -- Today, Department of Environmental Quality Secretary Peggy Hatch requested a fuel waiver from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that would make it easier for gas stations to maintain their fuel supply.

August 27, 2012

Ms. Lisa Jackson, Administrator
USEPA Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest
Washington, DC 10460

RE: Request for Fuel Waiver Concerning Gasoline for Louisiana

Dear Ms. Jackson:

As you already know, a tropical cyclone, Isaac, is near the Gulf of Mexico and is projected to make landfall at/near the Louisiana coast as a category 1 or 2 hurricane. Voluntary and mandatory evacuations began yesterday in South Louisiana parishes. Certain areas, including critical evacuation routes, will experience a shortage of the 7.8 RVP gasoline. Because of difficulties associated with matching the correct RVP fuel with the correct parish,

providing an adequate supply of gasoline to support evacuation, rescue, and recovery efforts will present extreme and unusual challenges as suppliers will struggle to provide an adequate quantity of fuel to those areas needing it most. As we have seen previously, in events such as Hurricane Katrina, successful evacuation is a matter of life and death.

On behalf of Governor Bobby Jindal and in consultation with United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 (EPA), the State of Louisiana respectfully requests temporary emergency relief from certain federal fuel requirements:

Waiver of RVP requirements: Louisiana has fuel requirements that differ from parish to parish creating a geographic complexity that presents unique fuel supply challenges during an event where evacuation is required. These requirements are as follows:

- Gasoline in certain areas of Louisiana, as designated in 40 CFR 80.27 and in the federally approved air quality State Implementation Plan, is required to have a Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) of 7.8 pounds per square inch (psi) during the ozone season.
- Other parishes (mostly northern parishes of the State) can have 9.0 psi RVP. It is expected that certain areas will experience a shortage of the 7.8 psi RVP gasoline.
- In the evacuation for Isaac, certain areas including critical evacuation routes will experience a shortage of 7.8 RVP gasoline. Because of difficulties associated with matching the correct RVP fuel with the correct parish, Louisiana is requesting a temporary emergency waiver of the 7.8 psi RVP requirements effective immediately that will allow use of 9.0 psi fuel.

Fuel demand in certain portions of the Southeast Louisiana area is already increasing and in some cases stations are out of fuel. Information regarding this shortage is attached. In the month immediately following Katrina, statewide gasoline sales increased by 16% over August 2005. Voluntary and mandatory evacuations began yesterday in South Louisiana parishes. This will have an impact on the employee base for the refineries supplying fuel to the region. The resulting production decreases or facility shutdowns will impact the availability of fuel in much of the area expected to be impacted by the hurricanes. Again, a waiver of the 7.8 psi RVP requirements will allow use of 9.0 psi fuel, if necessary, to help ensure that an adequate fuel supply is in

place.

During the evacuations in the pre-landfall of Katrina in 2005, panic began to set in within the 7.8 psi RVP fuel service area when an adequate supply of the proper fuel was not available. Based on our experience with Katrina, it is likely that most 9.0 psi RVP fuel that would be sold in the lower RVP area will be needed as part of the evacuation/rescue efforts and very little will be used to fuel vehicles that will remain in the area for normal use. Ultimately, we would expect to see minimal or no observable impact on local ozone levels as a result of using the higher RVP fuel in one of these designated areas. Again, approval of this request will allow 9.0 psi fuel to be sold for the duration of the waiver.

We trust that you will respond favorably to our request to maintain an adequate supply of fuel during the evacuation and aftermath of the storm. Thank you for your consideration and attention in this matter. If you have any questions, please call me at 225 219-3950 or your staff may contact Tim Knight at 225 219-3717.

Sincerely,

Peggy Hatch
Secretary

cc: Governor Bobby Jindal
Cynthia Giles, US EPA Headquarters
Samuel Coleman, P.E. US EPA Region VI

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